



TRINITY ACADEMY

Anti-Bullying and Equalities Policy

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OUR SCHOOL'S VALUES AND BELIEFS

All pupils and staff have the right to feel happy, safe and included. Our school values are: mutual respect between staff and pupils, inclusion, ambition and integrity. We set high expectations of success within a caring and supportive environment and this forms the basis of our positive school ethos.

We are committed to advancing equality of opportunity for all and we work actively towards eliminating all forms of bullying and discrimination. We recognise the effects that bullying and discrimination can have on pupils' feelings of worth, on their school work and in the community. We actively foster good relations between diverse groups and individuals.

At Trinity Academy we recognise that certain individuals and groups in society experience disadvantage, prejudice or discrimination on account of their age, disability, ethnicity, gender, gender change, looked-after status, pregnancy or maternity, religion or belief, sexual orientation and socio economic status or any combination of these.

DEFINITIONS

Equalities

We use the legal definition of 'equalities' which gives protection to people who have specific characteristics - for example being gay, lesbian or bisexual or from a minority ethnic group or disabled or old. It also includes boys and girls and anyone undergoing gender change, as well as those of particular faith groups. The Equality Act 2010 defines these as 'protected groups'.

Looked-after children, young carers and children and young people from economically challenging backgrounds can also be included as equalities groups.

Racism

"A racist incident is any incident which is perceived to be racist by the victim or any other person" While this is not absolutely definitive, it requires all allegations to be treated seriously from the outset, investigated and if substantiated dealt with and then recorded. This approach is in line with our anti-bullying procedures and all forms of identity-based bullying.

Bullying

"Bullying ... can make you feel frightened, threatened, left out and hurt. Something only needs to happen once for you to feel worried or scared to go to school or other places you enjoy going to. Just because someone doesn't realise how hurtful their behaviour is doesn't mean it's not bullying"
(Respectme)

Bullying is an abuse of (assumed) power that is defined by its effects. People who are bullied are very upset by something someone else has done or said to them or about them. They are likely to fear that this will happen again and feel powerless to stop it. Bullying is also a breach of children's rights under several articles of the Convention on the Rights of the Child.

Cyber-bullying is bullying behaviour that takes place via mobile phone or over the internet through e-mails, text messaging and social networking websites

Those who carry out bullying behaviour may try and justify their actions by saying it's 'just chat' or 'banter'. This is entirely unacceptable: Bullying is not a normal part of peoples' lives and needs to be consistently challenged and tackled.

Bullying behaviour takes many forms (with examples in brackets) :

- racist abuse (making racist comments based on assumptions & stereotypes)
- sexist abuse (discriminating against a particular gender)
- harassment (focusing negative attention on just one person)
- homophobia (graffiti that is offensive to pupils who are gay)
- biphobia (a pupil getting verbal abuse because they are bisexual or are perceived to be)
- transphobia (pupils purposely not working with another pupil in class because they are or are perceived to be a pupil going through gender reassignment)
- sectarianism (a pupil or staff member being verbally abused due to their religious beliefs or non-belief)
- sending abusive emails, text messages or making abusive comments on social networking sites (e.g. Facebook, Bebo, Snapchat, Instagram or MSN)
- assault (physical attack of one or more people by one or more people)
- forcing people to do things against their will e.g. stealing
- damaging or stealing property
- malicious notes or gossip
- teasing, cold shouldering/social isolation and being 'picked on'
- personal remarks about body image/appearance, disabilities, learning needs, family or social background
- any other behaviour which makes the victim or other people around them feel frightened, unhappy or isolated

Why do some pupils become involved in bullying type behaviour?

The reasons why pupils may get involved in bullying-type behaviour are many. Some examples include:

- to impress or establish leadership amongst a peer group
- to create a group identity by attacking an outsider
- pressure to conform - punishing non-conformity
- lack of social skills
- jealousy
- have been bullied themselves
- family and/or social problems

Those who carry out bullying actions or are at the receiving end may display certain behaviours, for example:

- deterioration of work
- faked illness
- erratic attendance
- low self esteem
- loss or lack of self respect
- isolation

- desire to remain with adults
- uncharacteristic behaviour or acting out to impress, e.g. showing off or aggressive behaviour

RESPONSIBILITIES

The Head Teacher is responsible for introducing and implementing this policy. They are also responsible for nominating an Equalities Coordinator who is familiar with Council equalities guidance, including the most recent guidance on Supporting Transgender young people. However, all staff, all pupils and their parents have an active part to play in the development and maintenance of the policy, and in its success.

Pupils are expected to

- report all incidents of bullying that they either experience or witness to a member of staff
- support each other and to seek help to ensure that everyone feels safe, and nobody feels excluded or afraid in school.

Staff are expected to

- be proactive and alert to signs of discrimination and bullying
- challenge discriminative behaviour such as racism or homophobia
- to liaise with the appropriate Pupil Support Leader
- investigate all incidents in a fair and consistent manner
- treat all allegations seriously and keep records of all incidents

Parents can help by

- supporting our anti-bullying policy and procedures.
- encouraging their children to be positive members of the school community.
- discussing with their child's PSL's any concerns that their child may be experiencing
- helping to establish an anti-bullying culture outside of school.

Senior Leadership Team will

- regularly monitor the implementation and effectiveness of this policy
- supervise the review and updating of this policy at least every four years.
- keep a school log of recorded incidents
- support staff, pupils and families to seek positive resolutions for all parties

Concerns and Complaints

We recognise that there may be times when parents feel that we have not dealt well with an incident of bullying and we ask that this be brought to the attention of the HT/DHT. If a resolution at this stage is not achieved then the matter can be referred to the City of Edinburgh Advice and Conciliation Service.

Prevention of Bullying and Discrimination

- We remind pupils at least twice a year about how our school deals with bullying, including cyberbullying.
- We make use of the Council's 2016 Guidance on supporting Transgender, Gay, Lesbian and Bisexual pupils.
- Sex, Relationships and Parenting Education is provided that meets the needs of every learner including LGBTI young people and always challenges sexism, homophobia, biphobia and transphobia.
- Periodic posters campaigns are used to remind pupils that bullying and discrimination are not acceptable and tell them what to do if they are bullied.
- We use evaluation tools which measure ethos, relationships and confidence in schools, such as pupil well-being questionnaires, pupil focus groups and bullying surveys.
- We involve other agencies and partners in health, police and the voluntary sector.
- The MVP Programme
- This school is working towards an award (e.g. Rights Respecting Schools Award, LGBT Charter of Rights)
- There is a buddy system, especially at transition
- Our staff are supported in accessing professional development opportunities that increase their awareness and understanding of bullying, prejudice and discrimination.
- Appropriate sanctions are in place

The Curriculum for Excellence is used to:

- Increase knowledge of children's rights and responsibilities as responsible citizens
- Provide age-appropriate reading materials and resources that provide a balanced diversity, e.g. family structures that include single parents, ethnic minorities, disabled people and same-sex parents.
- Monitor and improve, where needed, the attainment and achievement of pupils in protected groups to develop successful learners
- Ensure that children and young people in protected groups are appropriately included in developing pupil participation as effective contributors.
- Build resilience and empathy in young people as confident individuals

What We Do When Bullying Occurs

- Pupils who experience bullying or discrimination will be listened to and supported.
- Pupils who engage in bullying behavior or discrimination will be treated fairly and consistently using a range of measures.

Our support to pupils who are bullied or discriminated against

- They are reassured that they do not deserve this and it is not their fault.
- We assure them that it was right to report the incident.
- We encourage them to talk about how they feel and try to ascertain the extent of the problem.
- We engage them in making choices about how the matter may be resolved
- We discuss strategies for being safe and staying safe
- We ask them to report immediately any further incidents to us
- We affirm that it can be stopped and that we will persist with intervention until it does

Our work with pupils who bully or discriminate against others

- We interview the pupil (or pupils) involved in bullying/discrimination separately.
- We listen to their version of events and talk to anyone who may have witnessed the incident
- We reinforce the message that bullying/discrimination is not acceptable, and that we expect it to stop.
- We seek a commitment to this end.
- We ask that pupils keep copies of any threatening or abusive notes texts emails, or screenshots of social media sites and don't delete any abusive text messages. This is evidence.
- We affirm that it is right for pupils to let us know if they are being bullied or discriminated against
- We consider sanctions under our school's Behaviour/Discipline Policy and, where there is mutual will, we undertake restorative meetings
- We advise pupils responsible for bullying that we check to ensure that bullying stops.
- We ensure that those involved know that we have done so.
- When bullying occurs, we contact the parents of the pupils involved at an early stage.
- We follow up after incidents to check that the bullying has not started again.
- We work with pupils who have been involved in bullying others to ascertain the sort of support that they need.

Other strategies might include:

Peer mentoring and mediation

Counselling

Involvement of other agencies and partners in health, police and voluntary sector

Physical separation of person/people bullying, where necessary and possible

Support base, safe room where feasible

Sanctions, including loss of privileges

Referral to specific support service, such as Educational Psychologist, Education Welfare Service, Social Work service or Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service

In extreme cases, Child Protection procedures will be considered

Involvement of Police as needed

Exclusion from school is not itself a sanction or punishment for bullying behaviour and will only be used as a last resort

Reporting and Recording Incidents

Pupils who have been bullied or discriminated against, and pupils who see this happening to others, should report this to a member of staff.

Members of staff who receive reports that a pupil has been bullied or discriminated against should report this to the relevant Pupil Support Leader.

Reports of bullying and discrimination are passed to the DHT PS and are logged.

All incidents are recorded and acts of bullying or discrimination on ground of race, disability, gender, faith and sexual orientation are of equal concern and are all clearly distinguishable

We send annual summaries of incidents to Council headquarters on request.

Cyberbullying and bullying outside the school premises

We know that bullying can occur outside the school gates and via mobile phones and social network internet sites. The bullying may be done by pupils from our own school, by pupils from other schools or by people who are not at school at all. Where a pupil or parent tells us of bullying off the school premises we will:

- Talk to pupils about how to avoid or handle bullying outside of school.
- Talk to the HT of another school whose pupils are allegedly bullying.
- Consider additional support, police involvement and Child Protection procedures

PLANNING

We use all available information to ensure that the promotion of equality and anti-bullying issues are contained within our development plans.

INVOLVEMENT

We actively encourage all our young people to participate in school and extra-curricular activities and we take positive action to make sure that the diverse school population is represented in all aspects of school community life.

Parents are welcomed and respected in school and are encouraged to participate as fully as possible. Provision will be made for pupils to take time off for religious observance through authorised absence and adjustments will also be made in school.

EVALUATING AND REVIEWING OUR POLICY

We evaluate this policy using the following measures:

- Examining staff, parents and pupils views from surveys or focus groups
- The number of incidents that are reported to staff over a given period.
- Rates of attendance, exclusions and attainment and achievement of pupils
- From the comments received in our comments box.
- Pupils' perceptions and experiences of bullying in secondary schools through periodic questionnaires.

Resources

Here are some useful resources for young people, parents and staff:

www.respectme.org.uk

<http://www.kidscape.org.uk/parents/mychildisabully.html>

http://www.respectme.org.uk/cyberbullying_intro_txt.html

www.lgbtyouth.org.uk/home.htm

[ments/inclusionandequality/challengingsectarianism/resources/index.asp](http://www.inclusionandequality.org.uk/challengingsectarianism/resources/index.asp)